

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) A rifle, comprising:

a rifle support;

a ~~shell projectile~~ propulsion mechanism comprising a barrel;

screws that fix the ~~shell propulsion mechanism~~ barrel to the rifle support; and

a protective cover that covers an area on the rifle support including heads of the screws to protect a user therefrom, the protective cover comprising:

a main body having a predetermined length and width corresponding to a length and width of the area to be covered on the rifle support; and

a fixing device that fixes the main body to the area to be covered, wherein the fixing device comprises one or more deformable protrusions on the main body that configured to push-fit mate with one or more corresponding recesses on the rifle support.

25. (Currently Amended) The rifle in accordance with claim 24, wherein the main body is configured in size and shape such that at least part of a perimeter portion thereof mates with and is received in a recess formed on an exterior surface of the rifle support.

26. (Previously Presented) The rifle in accordance with claim 24, further comprising a positioning device that positions the main body on the rifle support.

27. (Previously Presented) The rifle in accordance with claim 24, wherein the main body is transversally convex towards an exterior thereof and longitudinally elongated.

28. (Previously Presented) The rifle in accordance with claim 24, wherein at least part of an exterior surface of the main body is smooth and can bear graphic printed information on the exterior surface.

29. (Previously Presented) The rifle in accordance with claim 24, wherein the cover comprises a single piece formed by injection molding a plastic material.

30. (Currently Amended) The rifle in accordance with claim 24, wherein the fixing device comprises at least two deformable protrusions that push-fit mate with at least two recesses that receive and fit around the deformable protrusions.

31. (Previously Presented) The rifle in accordance with claim 30, wherein the deformable protrusions have a mushroom shape.

32. (Canceled)

33. (New) The rifle in accordance with claim 26, wherein the positioning device comprises:

a plurality of positioning projections formed on an interior surface of the main body of the protective cover; and

a plurality of positioning recesses formed on the area to be covered on the rifle support, the plurality of positioning recesses receiving corresponding ones of the plurality of positioning projections to properly position the main body of the cover on the area to be covered on the rifle support.

34. (New) The rifle in accordance with claim 31, wherein the one or more corresponding recesses on the rifle support comprise generally cylindrical recesses on the rifle support, and wherein a diameter of the cylindrical recesses changes along the depth of the cylindrical recesses, the diameter of the cylindrical recesses being greater at greater depths in the cylindrical recesses.